FRENCH GOVERNMENT UFO STUDY

"Presentation to the Scientific Counsel of G.E.P.A.N. of Studies Undertaken During the First Semester of 1978," (June 1978, 5 volumes, approximately 500 pages).

This report of the French governmental UFO study group GEPAN[1] documents the studies carried out by the group during the first part of 1978. Three special groups (rapid intervention, physical traces, radar alert) were created as part of the study group's functions, but they were little used during 1978. Instead, the bulk of work was devoted to 11 cases of high credibility and high strangeness. Eleven such cases were studied in great detail; only one proved to have a conventional explanation. In the other 10, it appeared that the distance between the witnesses and the objects was less than 250 meters. Of the five volumes of the report, three were entirely devoted to analysis of these 11 cases, all except one of which was pre-1978. The earliest was 1966. Two of the cases were humanoid sightings.

The analysis and investigation was carried out by a four-person team in each case; the team included a psychologist, who separately carried out a psychological examination relevant to the evaluation of the testimony of the witnesses. The care with which distances, angles, and psychological factors were evaluated makes the bulk of the Condon Report seem very poor by comparison. In many cases, the investigations were textbook models of how such investigations should be carried out.

In 10 of the 11 cases, the conclusion was that the witnesses had witnessed a material phenomenon that could not be explained as a natural phenomenon or a human device. One of the conclusions of the total report is that behind the overall phenomenon there is a "flying machine. . . whose modes of sustenance and propulsion are beyond our knowledge."

GEPAN was created in 1977, under the direction of Dr. Claude Poher. Poher has now resigned, feeling that he has done everything he could do with the methods at hand. Nonetheless, the organization has not been disbanded but continues its work. During 1977, it was largely concerned with checking Poher's statistics, which it approved.[2] During 1978, it has expanded its operation into the investigation of actual cases. It is alerted to actual cases by teletype by the Gendarmerie, the French national police force. The above report has reportedly been approved by GEPAN's supervisory scientific counsel.

Note: the original report was limited to 120 or 140 copies and was secret. It is not available for general dissemination, and in any case is in French. There is extensive coverage in the report of the Teheran case, but nothing beyond what is known to American researchers; it was not one of the eleven cases studied, all of which were in France.

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[1]Group d'Etudes Des Phenomenes Aerospatiaux Non-Identifiees

[2]Although it did study two nocturnal light cases, both of which ended up labelled "unidentified". (Submitted by Ron Westrum.)